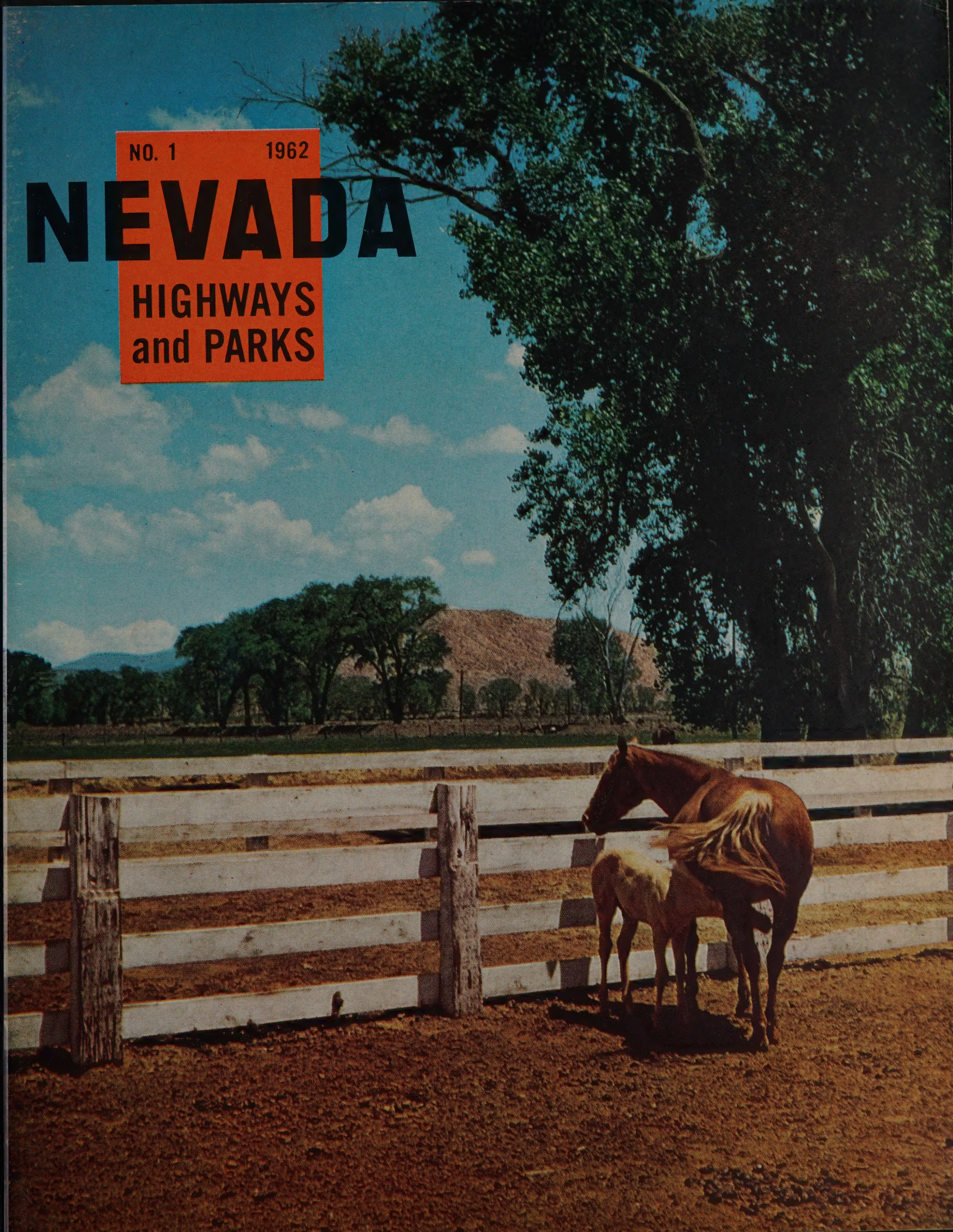


NO. 1

1962

NEVADA

HIGHWAYS
and PARKS





*An Oldtimer Looked Back...and
the Youngsters Helped Celebrate...*



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NEVADA
HIGHWAYS
and PARKS

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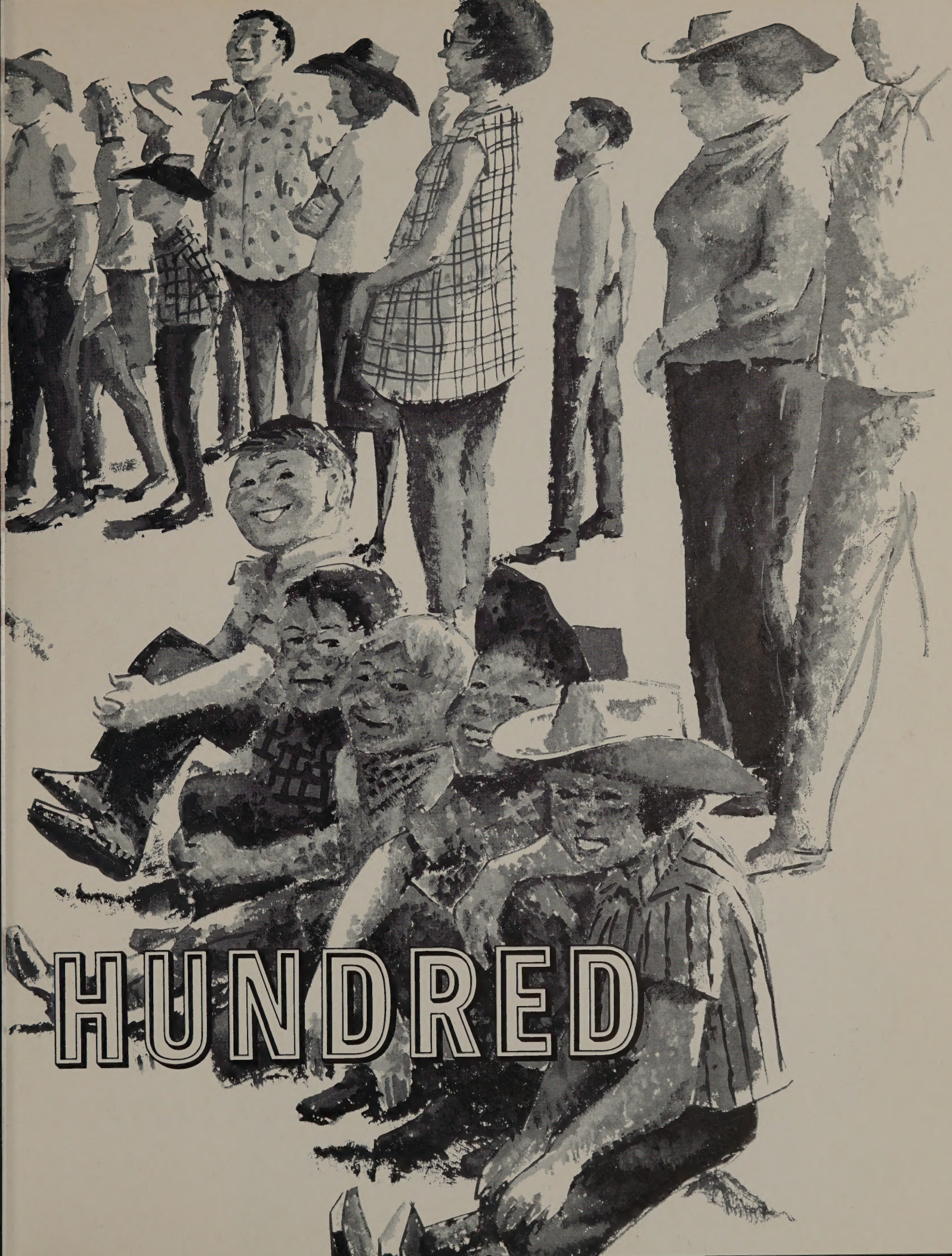
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W. F. ENGEL, *Assistant Editor*

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FRONT COVER—A ranch scene in Mason Valley south of Yerington.



MASON VALLEY IS ONE



HUNDRED



By MARY AIAZZI

Flags flapped lazily in the June breeze above the crowds lined up along Main Street. Children skipped through clusters of grownups, guided by radar to cotton-candy and soda-pop stands. Music blared forth from loudspeakers. All was in readiness for the parade to begin.

This was the scene in Yerington on a pleasant summer day last year when people gathered from miles around to celebrate Mason Valley's centennial. The parade was only one of a long list of events which went with this western-style holiday—there were rodeos, a fire-fighting contest, a street dance, a whiskerino, and the mile-long parade made up of marching and mounted units, floats and bands. In addition—one of the most colorful of all the events—there was a sack-tote contest patterned after an episode that had taken place in the valley 50 years earlier.

The Big Day was Observed in Colorful Fashion at YERING



On its hundredth birthday the long, narrow, mountain-rimmed valley was every bit as green and lovely as when it was named for Hock Mason in 1861, but here the similarity ends. Prosperous ranches now cover the entire valley, substantial homes now line its roads and water surges through its network of irrigation ditches. Near the center of the valley the awkward village which was once called Pizen Switch has grown to become the attractive and busy town of Yerington.

Many of the oldtimers who had helped to build the valley were in town for the centennial, and for one of these in particular the day had special meaning. He was Harry Warren, the man remembered for his remarkable stamina in 1910 when he won the first sack-toting contest. Harry was then in the bee business on the family ranch near Wabuska and the contest grew out of some good natured banter between him and several ranch hands loading sacks of wheat. How far could he manage to carry a 120-pound sack of grain? they challenged insistently. One thing led to another and before long Harry accepted their wager. A full-fledged contest was organized with a purse of more than \$2,000 gathered up for a prize for Harry in the unlikely event that he would succeed, as he promised, in toting a sack all the way to town.

Rules were drawn up for the one-man competition—the sack could not touch the ground during the trip, the 10 miles had to be covered in four hours, and three judges would accompany him to watch over the proceedings. Harry countered with several of his own stipulations—the road had to be passable, rest periods would be allowed, and he was to pack the sack in any manner he might devise.

Came time for the contest, a gloomy February day in 1910, and neighbors gathered from near and far to watch the big attempt.

Harry did it. He covered the 10-mile course in three and a quarter hours, then proved he was not tired by strolling with a youngster astride the sack for a final lap in downtown Yerington. Toasted by admiring friends at the Bank Bar, Harry was jubilant, but several of the men who had contributed to the purse were not quite so elated.





Many people turned out in old-time costumes for Mason Valley's centennial celebration which featured a rodeo, parade and other events.

"Harry's bees never stung me," one of the disgruntled was heard to remark, "but, by gosh, he just did!"

The first white man into Mason Valley was the famous trapper-explorer, Jedediah Smith, in 1827. John Fremont arrived in 1845 on an expedition, assigning one of his scouts, Joseph Walker, to examine the southern part of the slim, green valley. Walker here came upon the river which today bears his name, along with the lake into which it flows.

In 1854, Hock Mason and two brothers drove a herd of cattle from Arkansas into California, pausing for a few days on the banks of the river while the animals grazed. Mason explored the valley, found it to his liking, and vowed he would return—which he did in 1859 when he obtained land patents and brought in a herd of cattle. In 1861, it was officially named Mason's Valley and it quickly grew as other settlers pushed in to establish holdings through land patents or the Homestead Act of 1862. The rush for land continued through 1870.

Mason's Valley, as was its mailing address for many years, was originally part of Esmeralda County. But neither the boom town of Aurora, the county seat to the south, nor Dayton, which was the nearest town, paid much attention to the valley or its residents. Aurora accepted the tax moneys, while Dayton, the supply center, held out her hand for the ranchers' hard-earned cash.

Harry (wearing cap) watched as sack was weighed in, then began his famous 10-mile marathon, stopping now and then to rest. School recessed when Harry went by so the children could witness his now historic sack race.

Feature of the Day was the Re-enactment of this Colorful

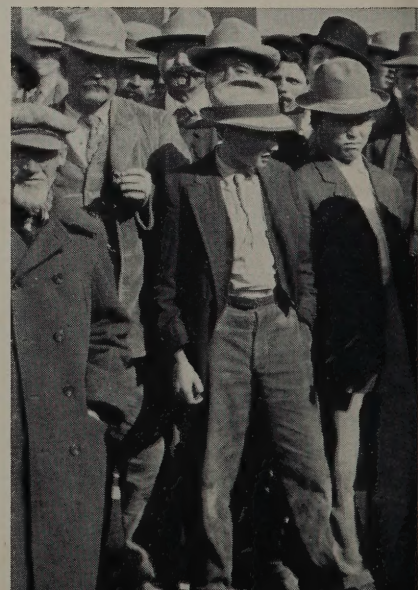
The first settlement was about midway up the valley and consisted primarily of a saloon constructed entirely of willows and appropriately called the Switch. The drinks sold here were said to be so unpalatable that even the most thirsty of its cowhand customers got to calling the place Pizen Switch, a name that attached itself firmly to the place.

By 1878, however, Pizen Switch no longer seemed dignified enough for the growing town and it was given the more respectable name of Greenfield. The energy generated by the community at this time brought it at least passing attention from its more firmly established neighbors. Dayton, for example, was somewhat warily watching developments in Mason Valley as is evidenced by this newspaper comment in 1879:

"The people of Mason Valley think no more of a twenty-dollar gold piece than us here in Dayton think of a twenty-five cent piece. The town is now officially known as Greenfield and is assuming respectable proportions. There are now two blacksmith shops, three stores, one large hotel, a billiard hall, and several residents. Whenever there is a ball in Greenfield, farmers from all parts of the valley attend. There are about four blooded horses in the valley and the only street is enlivened by horsemen who get up a race about every other day."

The name, Greenfield, held until 1894 when its residents, courting the favor of railroad magnate H. M. Yerington and hopeful that he would extend his Carson and Colorado Railroad south into the valley, discarded Greenfield like an old garment and renamed the town in his

Harry marched triumphantly into town, posed for pictures, and accepted congratulations from the crowd that surrounded him. He capped the climax by having a youngster hoisted onto the sack, giving him a short ride to prove that he wasn't tired from his long jaunt.





Judges
weighing the
Sack of wheat
at the Warren
Fair

"Sack-Tote" of 50 Years Ago



On Feb. 15th, Mr. Harry Warren
carried this sack of wheat weigh-
ing over 120 lbs. from the Warren



honor. The following year, 1895, brought the town its first newspaper, the *Rustler*, which promptly raised its editorial voice to demand certain improvements:

"A hitching rack should be placed in front of the church. Sidewalks should be laid in the business area. Stop the fast riding of horses through

An Old Winner Congratulates the New When the Race

town. The fire department should be called out every week so they can practice. People should pay their subscriptions to the *Rustler*. Loose cattle should be kept out of town. Traveling salesmen should be made to pay a license."

The efforts to bring the railroad into town proved in vain. Although the town became known as Yerington, the Iron Horse was elusive, never coming closer than the C & C station 12 miles to the north.

The valley meanwhile succeeded after years of complaint in removing itself from the administrative clutches of Esmeralda. It took three or four



is Won---

Harry Warren, the winner in 1910, congratulates the victor of the 1961 race, Mario Lommori. Above, the big moment is pictured as the contestants hoist their 120-pound loads and dash down Main Street.





days to travel south to Aurora to transact their official affairs, and valley ranchers understandably felt that they belonged rightfully to Lyon County. When the Carson and Colorado was built in 1880, the valley was linked even more closely to the western end of the state, this causing a new effort for a boundary change. It took three years and numerous petitions before Mason Valley made the grade, but it was finally annexed to Lyon County.

One last plum fell in 1907. The Lyon County Courthouse burned that year—some say mysteriously—and Yerington, after a flurry of bickering

Celebration Over, Mason Valley Settles Down to Await

in both camps, replaced the failing mining town of Dayton as county seat.

Copper mines were first developed in the valley in 1865 at Ludwig, to be followed by several other thriving operations centered near the town of Mason, southwest of Yerington. The early copper mines and smelters closed down before 1920 primarily due to the high cost of fuel and transportation, and it was not until the early forties that modern methods made it possible to produce copper profitably from large deposits of low grade ore. The huge Anaconda copper operation centered at Weed Heights is today one of the largest operations in the West.

While her mines have brought in great wealth, it is Mason Valley's rich farmland that has proven to be her most durable pay dirt. Developed through years of toil and effort, the valley's farms and ranches now make up one of the state's most important agricultural centers.

The view of Mason Valley today, with its cultivated fields, modern road and irrigation systems, mines and businesses, is totally unlike the scene of a hundred years ago. Life in the valley has not always been easy, nor has harmony always prevailed. But the courage, industry and faith of the early settlers has paid off well, and is reflected in the optimism and energy to be found there today.



Its Sesqui-centennial

Yerington today is a busy commercial center for the surrounding farm area. Above left, Main Street; above, a valley road; right, editors Walter Cox and Bob Sanford display a copy of the Mason Valley News whose slogan reads "The only newspaper in the world that gives a damn about Yerington."



Angel

A young girl with dark hair, wearing a pink and white patterned sleeveless top and pink shorts, is climbing a tree branch. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is a lush green landscape with trees and foliage.

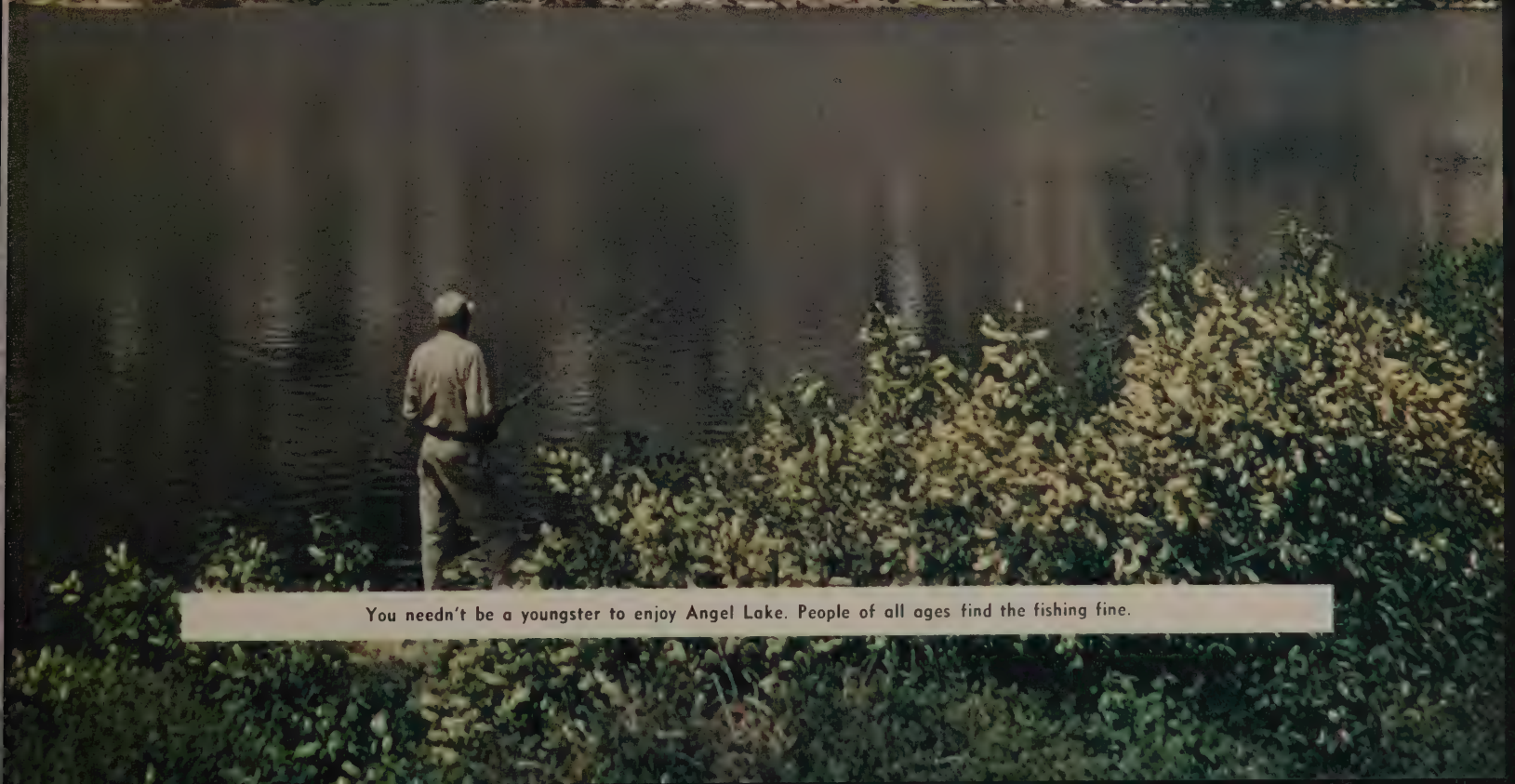
What to do on a hot summer day in Wells? These bright-eyed Indian youngsters know the answer.

Two children are in a body of water. A girl in a yellow one-piece swimsuit is standing in the water, smiling. Another child is partially visible on the right, also in the water. The background shows a rocky shoreline and trees.



Lake

in the Rubies



You needn't be a youngster to enjoy Angel Lake. People of all ages find the fishing fine.

This Gem of a Lake is Just a "Line's Cast" Away

By JEAN McELRATH

Eons ago a meandering glacier dragged a lazy heel along the towering Ruby Mountains in north-eastern Nevada. It scuffed out 20 "puddles" right close to heaven, but of those snow-fed, trout-happy, deer-haunted little lakes, only Angel is accessible by automobile.

Today's tourist, wishing to glimpse the trail of that ancient touring glacier, can easily reach it from Wells, Nevada. From downtown Wells a Forest Service road winds upward 12.8 miles over rolling hills, opening one sweeping desert panorama after another with each unfolding curve. The Angel Lake road (formally signposted as McCarran Way) is no four-lane macadamized speedway. It calls for careful steering, but its safe, gradual ascent from Wells' 5,633-foot level to the lake's 8,000-foot altitude is no strain for the average automobile. Tranquilly reflecting cloud wings, Angel appears just as the mountains ahead loom impossibly forbidding.

Mountain air, sharply aromatic with sage and juniper, builds enormous zest for the grilled steak dinners that place seems to call for. Grills, picnic tables, sturdy trash cans, even firewood, are provided by Wells' civic organizations in cooperation with the Forest Service. Insect pests are minimized by altitude, but golden squirrels and clowning chipmunks grow glossy-coated capitalizing on their impudent manners.

Rainbows that seem to have absorbed some of the rosy color cresting the Rubies at sunrise may reward dawn fishing, but only the greenhorn goes blithely unequipped with bacon and eggs for a breakfast cook-out. Trout, endowed with the arrogant independence of mountain lake dwellers, can, and do at times, curl a disdainful lip at any proffered bait. Yet, fishing is the delight of all comers, from the youngster with a sturdy willow pole to the almost hysterical fly-caster who pulls out a battle-scarred, hook-decorated three-pound veteran. Nevada's \$3.50 fishing permit allows the visiting lake-trout addict five days to pit his cunning against Angel's wily denizens. Ten dollars buys a season permit and the season is year-around at Angel Lake . . . legally, that is.

Mother Nature sets her own season, usually as short as it is sweet. She lets a big cat-n'-dozer chew through the last 10-foot snow drift in early June. For hunters (thousands of whom apply



yearly to Nevada's Fish and Game Commission in Reno for nonresident deer hunting permits), beginning with bow and arrow addicts in September, she leaves just time enough to discover how canny are the dainty-stepping big mule deer that seem so shyly trusting all summer. Then, she closes the season and lets skiers lace the road with their slim trceries.

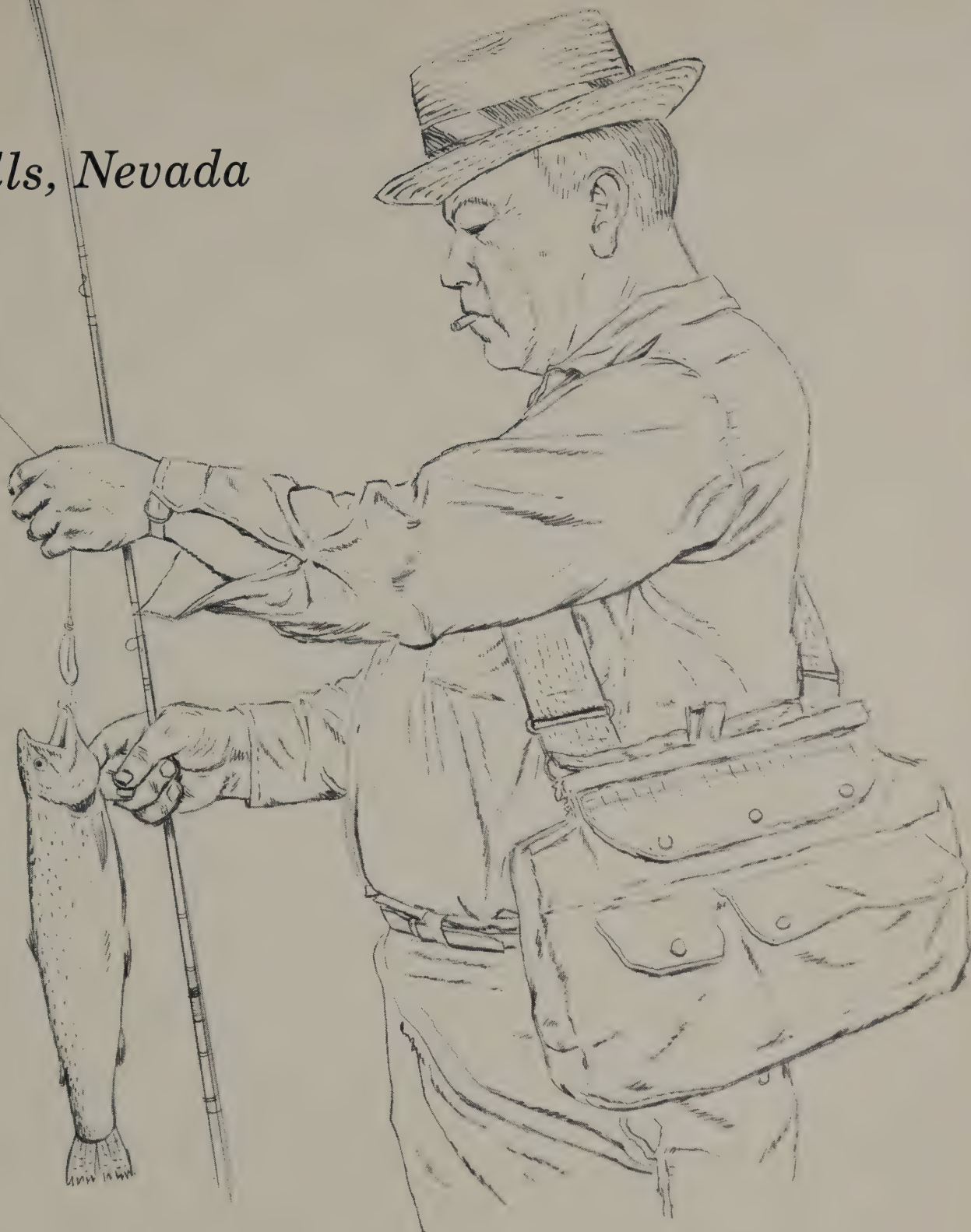
Fly fishermen, as fly fishermen will, swear theirs is the only way to lure trout from icy, blue-green waters. Some prefer the bait-resting-on-the-lake-bottom method. Trolling from a rowboat affords rewardingly lazy hours for others.

When nothing tempts Ye Trotte, the real fisherman, who is also a philosopher, finds the vistas from atop the bluff behind the lake breath-taking—not only because of the climb either! One can see a hundred miles or more, north, south and east, across sage-grayed beds of ancient seas to mountains in Utah and Idaho, hung in soft blue unreality.

Children and oldsters who disdain the pleasure of trying for trout find still another reason for traveling up to Angel Lake on a hot day. A quick dip in its frigid waters, they know, is a sure way to beat the summer heat. But they have learned from the stern glances of fishermen that it's best to swim on shores as far removed as possible from where the fish are biting.

Year-around snow rims the peaks above the lake and feeds the merrily tumbling little falls behind it. Spring, summer and autumn coincide here in a seasonal hocus-pocus that makes spring

from Wells, Nevada



wild flowers blossom at the same time choke-cherries are ripening to dusky tartness and quaking aspens blaze gold and red from the kiss of frost.

Stars swing within touching distance of the camper on a summer night. Viewing them from the drowsy warmth of his sleeping bag, he is grateful to the ancient touring glacier that also made this little detour.

Center pages, over—This is the view that opens up en route to Angel Lake on the winding, fast-rising road from Wells. The drive alone is worth the trip but the big prize is Angel Lake at the top. Color photo by Adrian Atwater.







H. G. BLASDEL

NEVADA'S FIRST GOVERNOR

1865-1870

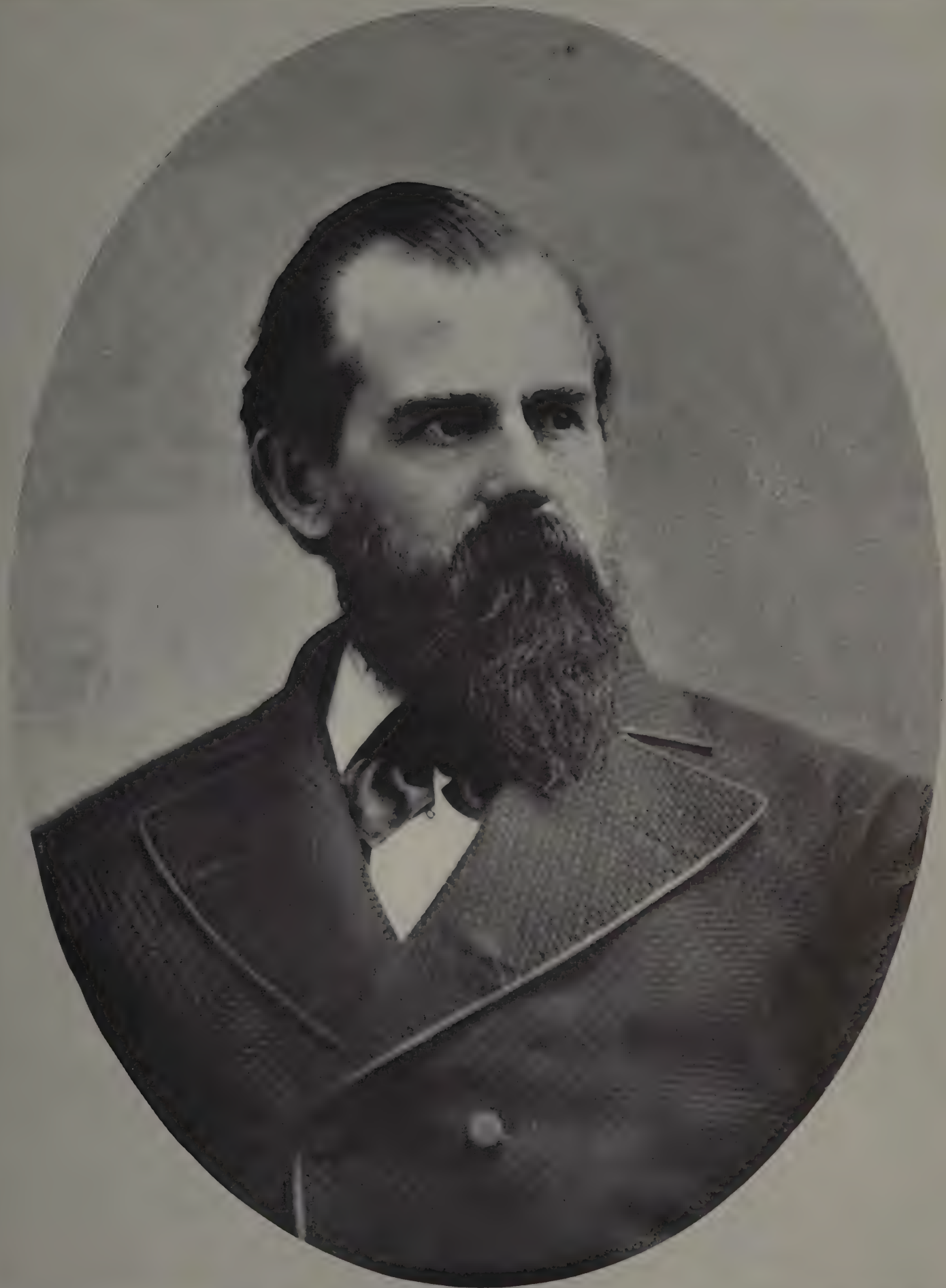
"Presented by a few friends who can appreciate integrity." This simple inscription on a gold watch given Henry Goode Blasdel by his creditors describes both the life and character of the first governor of the State of Nevada. His strait-laced, conservative manner presented a strange contrast to the rawboned, violent land he was to govern for six years of its infancy.

The color and exuberance of the Comstock era were a far cry from the quiet, temperate, and deeply religious atmosphere of the Indiana farm of Blasdel's youth. His ancestors had been farmers who had come to this country from Scotland in the mid-1600's. He was not destined, however, to follow in their footsteps.

In 1845 he married a childhood friend, Sarah Jane Cox. Soon thereafter he left the farm to sell produce and then became a steamboat pilot. In 1852 he and his wife came west to look for their fortunes in the gold fields of California. Blasdel's first attempt at placer mining on the American River failed, so he tried farming, then merchandising in San Francisco.

The crash of 1860 forced him out of business in California and brought him to Virginia City where he became prominent as a mill operator and superintendent of several mines. He decided to leave the Comstock, however, and sold his holdings there to return to Indiana. While in the East he attended the National Republican Convention. Fate steered him back to Nevada again in 1864 where, because of his activity on the committee that nominated Abraham Lincoln for a second term, he was drafted as candidate for Nevada's first governor.

He won in 1864 and again in 1866 when he served for a four-year term. A temperate and religious man, he is remembered for his conservative ways in public and private life. Blasdel never drank anything stronger than coffee and insisted that his minister live with him in the Mansion. He retired from office in 1870 and resumed his interest in mining in Nevada. Several years later he moved back to California and died there in 1900 at the age of 75.





*The Nevada Fish
and Game Commission
Introduces*
GAME BIRDS
from INDIA

By DAVE MATHIS

When he came to work as an upland game biologist for the Nevada Fish and Game Commission in 1952, Glen Christensen had no idea that he would one day be living half a world away in a remote section of India. But this is exactly where he found himself in 1959 after he was selected for an unusual and challenging assignment—to go to India on a quest for exotic game birds which might adapt to the desert country in southern Nevada.

“Exotics,” as they are called by game management experts, are species of birds not native to the United States nor, in most cases, to North America. One of the best known exotics in this country is the pheasant, a sporting bird brought from China and released here during the early 1900’s. Another exotic which today thrives in Nevada and other western states is the chukar partridge whose original homeland is in northern India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Both the pheasant and the chukar, which was introduced into Nevada in 1935, offer convincing evidence that carefully selected foreign birds adapt well to this area.



Black Francolin
&
Grey Francolin
Partridge

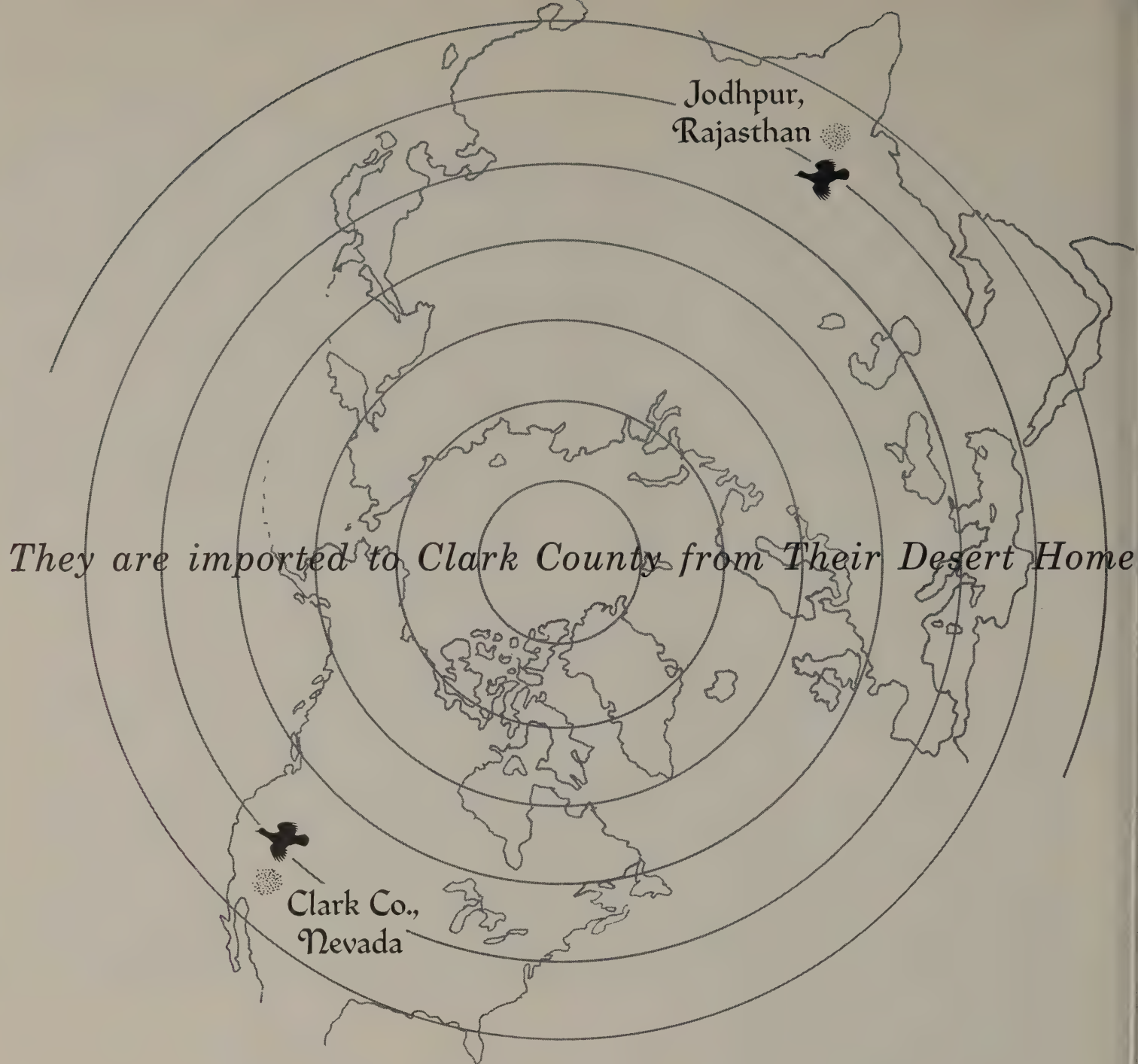


Common Indian
&
Imperial Indian
Sand Grouse



Glen Christensen, left, came back to Nevada after more than two years in India to help band and release the birds he had trapped near Jodhpur. They are (top) the black and grey Francolin and (above) the Imperial and common Indian sand grouse.





Spurred on by its success with these birds, the Nevada Fish and Game Commission continued its search for other types of exotics to fill game voids in the state. Particularly the Commission was eager to find birds suitable for southern Nevada where over a third of the state's hunters reside, yet which is the only portion of the state where upland game is in short supply. The chukar, which so prolifically adapted to most counties in Nevada, failed to find the southern part of the state to its liking. What was needed here was a game bird which would adapt to the hot, arid environment in Clark and parts of Lincoln and Nye Counties. Culmination of the Commission's efforts was the project started in 1958 which took the Christensens to India.

That year the Nevada Fish and Game Commission, in cooperation with the U. S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife and the Wildlife Management Institute, decided to experiment by bringing in Indian birds. Earlier the Commission had unsuccessfully attempted to secure exotics from commercial game farm operators in the U. S., from overseas exporters, and from the U. S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. None of these sources was able to provide the right species in the quantities needed for a successful release attempt. By sending its own expert abroad, Commission officials thought that the right bird could be "hand picked" from terrain similar to Nevada's.

Glen Christensen was the man for the job. A Reno resident and graduate of the University of



Near Jodhpur—Indians and their nets.

Half a World Away

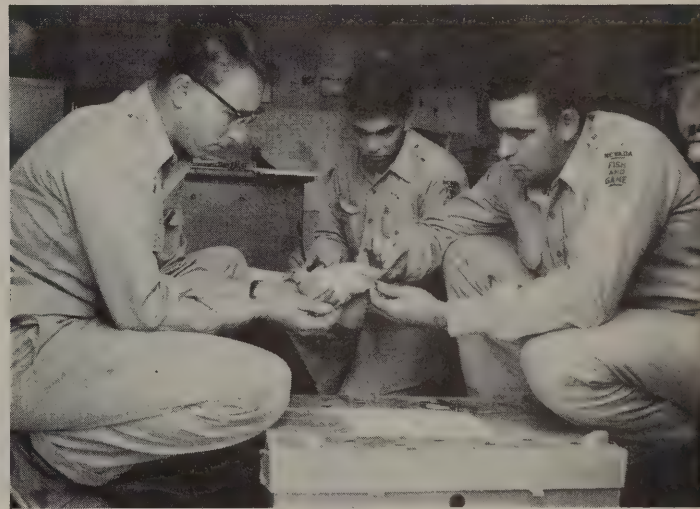
Nevada, he had written a biological bulletin on chukar in Nevada and was a recognized authority on the subject. With his wife and two children, he departed for India in January, 1959. Jodhpur was selected as headquarters for the project since it was situated on the extremities of the great Indian or Thar Desert country, some 400 miles southwest of New Delhi, which is similar in many respects to the southern Nevada area. Glen's task was to trap native game birds in this arid region and prepare them for shipment back to Nevada. As far as is known, this is the only project of this type ever sponsored by any state fish and game organization in the country.

The fruits of Glen's labors are impressive. He trapped and sent to Nevada over 5,000 exotic game birds of four species—the grey Francolin, the black Francolin, the common Indian sand grouse, and the Imperial sand grouse. The Francolins are relatives of our chukar and quail and fall between the two in size. The sand grouse are members of the dove family. The common grouse is a bit larger than our mourning dove, while the Imperial is considerably bigger. The birds were flown from India to Nevada, taken to the Commission's Mason Valley wildlife management area to recuperate, and then were released, for the most part, in southern Nevada. Only a small number of greys and blacks were turned loose further north in the Mason Valley vicinity.

The greys and blacks taken to southern Nevada have already brought off broods, indicating that they may adapt to their new home. The sand grouse have not yet indicated that they will take to Nevada but there is still a good chance that they will. The experiment with these birds in



Birds were brought by plane to Nevada.



They were taken to Smith Valley to rest.



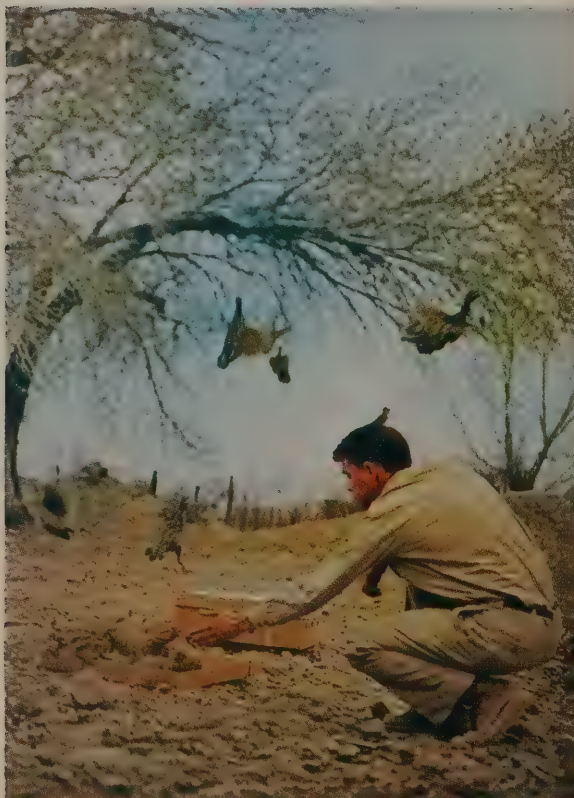
Later—to their new home in Las Vegas.

Nevada's Fish and Game Experts Think the Indian Birds Will

Nevada could have significant effects. If they can live here, the birds can also adjust to other western states and thus open bright new hunting vistas in the entire region.

In addition to trapping 5,000 birds with the help of native Indian trappers, Glen spent considerable time investigating the birds' native environment and the similarities of these conditions to those found in Nevada. About his observations, Glen reported, "Ecologically the country has much in common with Nevada's southern deserts. Except for the monsoons, annual precipitation is almost identical, temperatures are similar, and plant food types very closely related."

Aside from making observations of the bird habitat as part of his job, Glen and his family had considerable time in which to observe the people and living conditions of that country. About the people, Christensen had this to say, "Only a very small percentage were formally educated and



Here birds are being released in arid Clark County where plant life and climate is quite similar to their native India. Fish and Game experts hope the birds will reproduce here and provide good hunting in southern Nevada.



these all spoke fluent English, as did many of the merchants; all were polite, gregarious, friendly, easy-going and evinced a respect for their fellow men. They lived well together and their children were well-behaved."

Glen and family found Jodhpur short on many of the things they had become accustomed to as necessities of living. But, they adopted a "when in Rome do as the Romans do" philosophy. They bought supplies of staple foods that would last two

Thrive In Their New Home Near Sunny Las Vegas



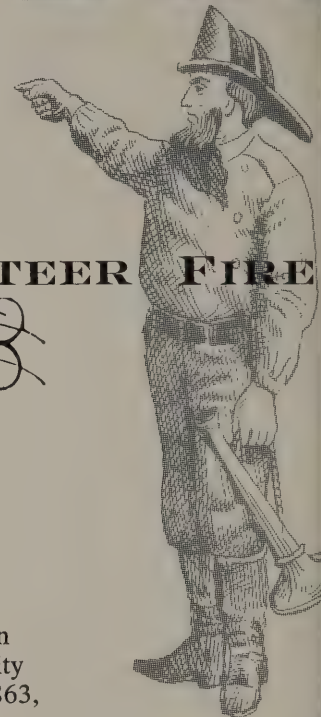
or more months from the Embassy commissary in New Delhi. For meats and vegetables they shopped in Jodhpur. At first, the only meat available seemed to be big goat and little goat. Eventually, Glen found where he could buy sheep which he butchered himself and he also provided meat through hunting. Mostly, he hunted a large antelope called the Nil Guy or Blue Bull. When it came to hunting, Glen said it was more necessary to understand the people than the habitats

of the game. Some of the many religious sects of the country condone hunting and killing but some believe that to kill anything is a serious wrongdoing.

Over-all, Glen was impressed with India. His personal file of experience was greatly enriched by the trip, and chances are that the "exotics" he trapped may enrich the hunting experiences of sportsmen for years to come, not only in Nevada but in other western states as well.

WARREN ENGINE

The OLDEST VOLUNTEER FIRE



Among the hundreds of historic items in the Warren Engine Company's museum are these brass torches and a hand lettered memorial document done in the ornamented style of seventy-five years ago.

Other volunteer fire companies were organized earlier than Warren Engine Company No. 1 of Carson City which was established on June 17, 1863, a year before Nevada became a state.

New York's first fire-fighting company was formed during the Revolution, equipped with two English engines built by Richard Newsham, a pioneer fire-engine builder. Almost every other city in Colonial America had its own volunteer fire department. In Alexandria, Virginia, for example, there was the Friendship Fire Company which listed George Washington among its members.

On the west coast, various volunteer companies were in business well before Warren Engine No. 1 got started, but all of them have long since disbanded. Herein lies Warren's chief claim to fame—it is the oldest, still-active volunteer group in the West.

The first piece of equipment owned by the department here—and indeed the reason for its being—was a Hunneman engine built in the early 1800's by William C. Hunneman of Boston, an apprentice of Paul Revere. It was originally used by the Warren Engine Company of Boston, then was shipped around the Horn to serve in San Francisco and, later, in Marysville. In 1863 the Marysville volunteers disbanded and sold the engine to the men in Carson City who determined to call themselves the Warrens after the company in Boston.

WARREN ENGINE CO. NO. 1

COMPANY *in the* WEST

Warren Engine Company No. 1 of Carson City was formed by 20 charter members who had no trouble gathering up \$2,000 for the engine from their fellow townspeople. After paying for the engine, the Warren boys rejuvenated their treasury by doing as all good fire companies do. They held a ball. Townspeople turned out in numbers for the cause, cheerfully paying six dollars for dancing and supper furnished by the ladies of the town. The Warren boys appeared for the first time in full uniform—bright red shirts and fancy leather belts—and were recipients of a banner made by four local young belles.

The Hunneman engine was the pride and joy and, needless to say, the friend and protector of this little community of frame houses heated by wood and coal stoves. The little engine proved its spunk shortly after its arrival when it was featured in a demonstration staged in the Carson City plaza where the Capitol Building now stands. While townspeople looked on in amazement, the little engine threw a stream for a distance of 209 feet through a $\frac{7}{8}$ -inch nozzle and 100 feet of hose. Then it pumped two streams 166 feet through $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch nozzles and did a grand finale by shooting a perpendicular stream 155 feet into the air!

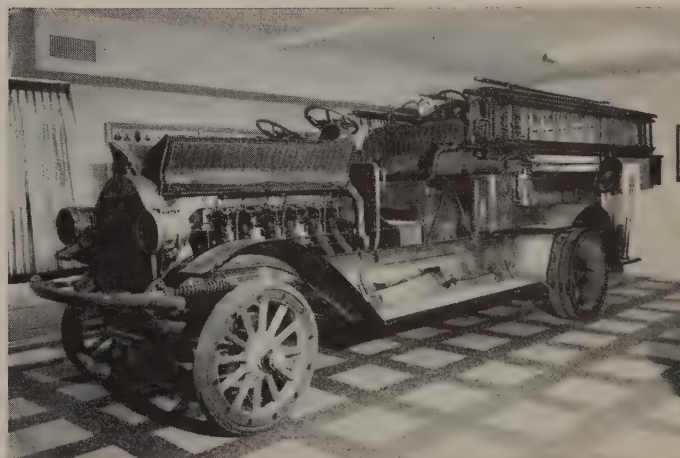
A fire in Carson City in the old days was a major and noisy event. One alarm bell was enough to alert the entire populace but when the blazes were unusually threatening every bell in town went into action and the din was overpowering.



A group of early Warrens in full uniform—red shirts, leather belts and helmets.



These old hose carts served for many decades in Carson City.



The first motorized engine in Nevada, this is the 1913 Seagrave.



The Warren boys rush into action, lights blazing and sirens screaming. Their equipment is modern, but they serve in a tradition which is a century old.

The Warren boys took on their first big fire in 1864 when a blaze in the Young American Saloon flared up after midnight and chewed its way through an entire block of buildings. During the next few years there was the usual run of small fires, although several of major proportions are recorded in the company records. In 1865 an entire block of downtown Carson was destroyed with damage estimated at \$25,000. In 1867 flames endangered the State Prison, burning down all but the newer wing of the building.

Everyone has heard of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, but few remember the blaze that destroyed almost all of downtown Reno in 1879 when that still small hamlet was growing up along the railroad tracks. The Warren engine was gallantly rushed to Reno to assist, but the blaze had done its worst by the time it arrived.

Competition for the Warrens appeared in 1864 in the form of a new company, the Curry Engine Company No. 2, which was followed by a third

group a few years later, the S. T. Swift Company. The Curryrs were the proud possessors of a hand-pump engine and the Swifts, the even prouder operators of one of the new-fangled steam engines.

Members of the three groups were locked in bitter rivalry from the start and often, in their zeal to get "first water" on a fire, would become engaged in violent arguments or fistfights. The Swifts and Curryrs several times approached the Warrens to seek a merger, but were always abruptly turned away. Both the Johnny-come-lately companies eventually disbanded.

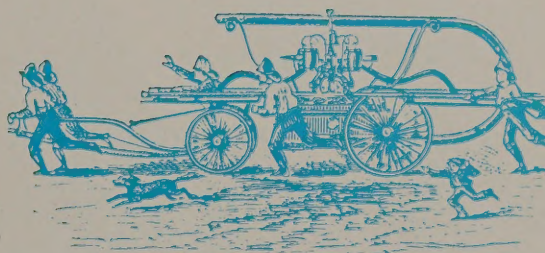
The fire companies were the focal point of community life late last century in Carson City as elsewhere. Many of the social events or celebrations would not have been possible without the firemen.

The newspapers heaped piles of praise on the fire laddies for their work, but at the same time they never failed to complain when something seemed to go wrong. Editors of the day carped





Among the many rare items in the Warren museum is a complete set of valuable Currier and Ives prints called *The Life of a Fireman*. **Opposite page**—*The Race*, **above**—*The New Era*, and **left**—*The Night Alarm*. These were printed in New York City in 1854 and show fire fighting in those colorful days.



when the engines were slow in getting to fires, they grouched when displays of rivalry got out of hand, and they apparently never learned that it was dangerous to report which company got to a fire first. "There appears a dispute as to which of the fire companies got the first water yesterday evening," an editor wrote following a fire in 1876. "The Warrens claimed the honor but a deputation of the Currys called on us this morning and denied the assertion."

Once—in 1882—a newspaper reported that "some of the boys got too much free whisky at the fire and had to be taken to the jug to quell their boisterous propensities." The men who dropped in to warm themselves near the firehouse stoves also sometimes caused trouble, for it was duly reported in 1875 that "the Curry Engine

Company, one of the most rowdy places in Carson, has now become as orderly as a meeting house. No more loungers, no more vile language is to be heard, and now respectable ladies and gentlemen have no need to travel round two blocks to avoid the obscenity heretofore emanating from the building."

The firemen took such criticism not too gently. Stung by an editorial concerning its fire-fighting methods, the foreman (the chief) of one company once wrote irately to the paper that the newspaper "had better attend to the town's sewerage, its hoodlums, its stray cattle, and the firemen will attend to its fires."

The Warren Engine Company celebrated its 50th anniversary in grand style in 1913. Perhaps moved by the event, the city officials later that year purchased an up-to-date engine for the company. This was a Seagrave, the first motorized truck in Nevada. It was used for a time in Reno, then sold to Carson City where it served many years before more modern gear could be purchased.

Warren Engine Company, today approaching its centennial, now has equipment which is the envy of far larger companies. The Warrens built a handsome new firehouse several years ago, reserving the upper floor for a museum which contains many rare and interesting relics of the early fire-fighting days.

While it now has ample quarters and the latest in modern fire-fighting gear, Warren Engine Company No. 1 has not changed in one respect from the day it was started. Its men are still volunteers, serving without pay and ready to serve day or night. Whenever the siren sounds they spring immediately into action, heeding once again the decades-old motto of the company: "Where duty calls, there you'll find us."



Men of the Warren Engine Company No. 1 test hoses and equipment in one of their regular monthly drills. Membership is by invitation only, and invitations go only to those "of good reputation who show active interest in the company." Today there are 25 active members, few more than in the early days.





Spic and span as always, the modern trucks of the Warren Company are lined up in dress parade. The Warrens now boast six trucks, a boat and other gear. Museum is located on the second floor of the firehouse in downtown Carson, is open to the public free of charge.

THANKS TO . . .

JEAN McELRATH, dynamic writer of Wells, Nevada, describes Angel Lake in her article on page 12.

DAVE MATHIS, information specialist with the Nevada Fish and Game Commission displays an expert knowledge of his subject in his bird story on page 20. Glen Christensen, hero of Dave's story, loaned the photo on page 23 taken in India.

MARY AIAZZI, member of a pioneer Mason Valley family, includes many colorful historical facts about her valley in her story on page 2.

VIRGIL BERNARD, now of Lake Tahoe, was the lad who rode on Harry Warren's sack of wheat in 1910. Thanks to Mr. Bernard for loaning the photos on page 7.

THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY kindly loaned the Blasdel portraits on pages 18-19.

MEMBERS of the WARREN ENGINE COMPANY NO. 1 generously provided facts and information for the story which appears on page 26. Special thanks to long-time member John Olding and to Mel Woodgate for their cooperation.

DON BOONE took the color photos for the Yerington story including the front cover view.

ADRIAN ATWATER, staff photographer, took all other color photos in this issue.





Another of the Currier and Ives prints contained in the Warren Museum (see page 26). This is called *The Ruins*, was printed in 1854.